**Award of stipends/scholarships/fellowships**

1830. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that stipends/scholarships/fellowships are awarded to meritorious students qualifying competitive examinations or other selection procedures, for pursuing higher academic pursuits or research;

(b) if so, the number of students awarded such financial support during the last five years with amount disbursed, year-wise and discipline-wise;

(c) whether it is a fact that the stipends/scholarships/fellowships are inadequate and their disbursement is irregular, resulting in hardship to the students and constraints in their academic pursuits; and

(d) if so, whether the stipends/scholarships/fellowships amount would be enhanced to match current inflation rate and the measures initiated to ensure speedy and regular disbursement?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) Yes Sir. This Ministry is implementing the National Scholarship Scheme, Scheme of Scholarship at the Secondary Stage for Talented Children from Rural Areas and the Scheme of Scholarships to Students from Non-Hindi Speaking States for Post-Matric Studies in Hindi. Under these schemes grants-in-aid are released to State Governments who select the students and distribute the scholarships.

(b) The amount under each scholarship vary from course to course and year to year and also based on whether the student is a day scholar or hostel resident. The States are given grant-in-aid under the plan schemes to meet expenditure on scholarships over and above the level reached in the last year of the previous plan. There are also fresh scholarships and renewals. Since there is no direct correlation between amount disbursed and number of scholarships given, the actual number of scholarships given to students are not reported by the State governments.

(c) and (d) To overcome the various constraints, in the 10th Five Year Plan besides increasing the rates of scholarships and parental income ceiling, a National Merit Scholarship Scheme has been formulated by merging the National Scholarship Scheme and Scholarship at the Secondary Stage for Talented Children from Rural Areas.